

THE SOUTH DEVON LINK ROAD, KINGSKERSWELL, DEVON - DECOY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE LINK ROAD

(SX 87146 69105)

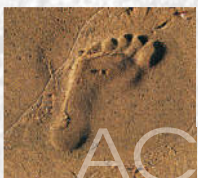
Results of historic building recording

Prepared by
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On behalf of:
Galliford Try

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archaeology

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Summary

An historic building record of a former toll house on Kingsteignton Road, Abbotskerwell, Devon was prepared by AC archaeology in October and November 2014 prior to and during its demolition. The building was erected in c. 1765 and was a small two-storied building with two rooms on each floor. It probably incorporated a bay window overlooking Kingsteignton Road. There were three extensions – an early store, and a contemporary water closet and kitchen. These may have been added in the 1950s, when other changes were made to the building, and may be associated with the partial use of the house as a tea room.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

- 1.1 This document sets out the results of historic building recording carried out by AC archaeology in October and November 2014 during the construction of the South Devon Link Road – Decoy Industrial Estate Link Road, Abbotskersell, Devon (SX 87146 69105). The recording was commissioned by Galliford Try following consultation with the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (HET).
- 1.2 The improvements along the Decoy Link Road section involved widening the existing Kingskerswell Road linking Aller Cross to the Decoy Industrial Estate on the southwest outskirts of Newton Abbot, a distance of approximately 500m. Located within the southeast end of the route were two structures – a former toll house and a stone and brick barn – that have been demolished to facilitate the road widening. From its midpoint, the scheme is positioned on ground that slopes downhill gradually to the north and south from 17m to 12m aOD. The underlying solid geology comprises sandstone of the Upper Greensand Formation to the south, with sand, silt and clay of the Bovey Formation elsewhere (British Geological Survey Online Viewer).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Plate 1)

- 2.1 The present works follow on from fieldwork for the main South Devon Link Road scheme at Aller Cross to the southeast, where excavations confirmed the presence of a multi-phase Iron Age and Romano-British enclosure (Hughes and Payne 2013). The phases of Romano-British enclosure ditch all appear to respect the line of the modern road at the point where it crosses into the site from the northwest. The way in which the enclosures respected the line of the existing road suggests that this route provided an important entrance or thoroughfare to the site and hints at the possibility of the presence of an earlier road or trackway heading in the direction of Decoy Industrial Estate along Kingskerswell Road.
- 2.2 The north section of the scheme has been the subject of a previous trial trench evaluation (Pears and Kerr-Peterson 2014), during which two trenches were excavated, being positioned to target the line of the putative Roman road or prehistoric trackway extending from Aller Cross to the southeast. Both trenches contained re-cut ditches, with a number of fills from one ditch containing 18th and 19th century artefacts. The ditches are likely to be associated with late post-medieval and modern land division and drainage, including for the road. No evidence for earlier roadways or other features was present.
- 2.3 On the junction of Kingskerswell Road and Priory Road is the former Langford Toll House (Devon Historic Environment Record reference MDV28408), comprising a

two-storey rectangular structure. This was originally constructed around 1765 by the Keyberry Bridge and Torquay Turnpike Trust and with the adjacent Grade II listed Langford Bridge (National Heritage List no. 1097350) marked the start of the turnpike road (Jenkinson and Taylor 2009, 80). The building is depicted on the 1839 Abbotskerswell parish tithe map, along with the stone and brick barn to the northwest. The subsequent 1887 first-edition Ordnance Survey map names the toll house as 'Langford Bridge Cottage' and shows it as having extensions on its north and west sides. By 1937, the toll house is depicted as reverting to a rectangular footprint. A photo taken in the 1950s (provided by the HET; Plate 1) shows the toll house being used as a tea room and shows an extension on its west side. The house has been derelict since at least the mid 1980s (Paul Rainbird, pers. comm.). The first-edition Ordnance Survey Map also depicts the position of a milestone on the southwest side of the road, to the northwest of the stone and brick barn.

3. AIM

- 3.1** The aim of the works was to preserve by record the toll house through a programme of historic building recording prior to and during its demolition.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The recording was carried out in accordance with a project design prepared by AC archaeology (Hughes 2014). It comprised a Level 1 Record as set out in the English Heritage (2006) document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*. Reference was also made to the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (revised 2008). The work comprised a photographic record, supplemented by a written description. Due to its condition, access to the interior was not possible. The majority of the record was prepared during initial demolition and removal of bats when vegetation, windows and the roof covering were removed from the building.

5. HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING (Plates 2-10)

5.1 General description

The building is located within a small enclosure and positioned at the junction of Kingsteignton Road and Priory Road, aligned alongside the former (Plate 2). The enclosure is defined by mortared rubble limestone walls that have been removed at the road junction. The main body of the building is rectangular with a rounded southeast corner fronting the road junction. It is constructed of limestone and the external elevations have been rendered. The building is two storied under a hipped roof with hips at the north and south gables. The roof covering is slates with ceramic ridge tiles. A brick chimney projects above the roofline on the west side and is constructed of drilled red bricks laid in stretcher bond.

5.2 The exterior

On the ground floor of the north elevation there is a low doorway at the east end with a wooden frame. Two internal steps lead down into the building. To the west there is a single-storey kitchen extension entered from a doorway in the rear room of the house (Plate 3). It is constructed of yellow candy bricks laid in stretcher bond, and incorporates a wooden-framed window in its north wall. The exterior elevations have

been rendered in cement. The extension has a pitched slate roof that had been repaired with corrugated iron sheeting. On the first floor there is a single wooden-framed side-opening casement window that is missing its glass; it appears to be a later insertion.

No openings were visible in the west elevation from the exterior but a wooden-framed window can be seen on the first floor from the interior. There are two single-storey extensions on this side of the house. At the front of the property is a limestone rubble store entered via a doorway from Priory Road. The wall is finished in lime plaster, most of which has fallen away. It has a pitched corrugated iron sheet roof. Attached to the rear of the store is a water closet, constructed of red brick laid in stretcher bond that has been rendered in cement although most has now fallen away (Plate 4). It has a pitched corrugated iron sheet roof through which a metal vent pipe exits.

The east elevation currently incorporates a single ground-floor wooden-framed two-light window and the remains of a first-floor, probable two-light, window (Plate 5). The former is under a thick wooden lintel. It may be set within a larger original opening that extended to the north. This is defined by a long wooden lintel under a row of wide, vertically-set limestone voussoirs, with bricks used as the blocking material (Plate 6).

The south elevation has a ground-floor doorway set close to the east corner, which is under a narrow corrugated iron sheet porch. Above this is a first-floor window opening; the frame has been removed. To the west is the doorway to the store, under a wooden-panelled gable, beyond which is the overgrown wall to the enclosure (Plate 7).

5.3 Interior

On the ground floor the toll house contains two rooms divided by a timber tongue and grooved partition. The southern room is larger, occupying approximately two-thirds of the original footprint. The floors in both rooms are concrete and there is a slight step up from the south room to the north room. In the centre of the west wall of the south room is a fireplace. The fire grate is missing but would have sat within a brick surround which itself had been constructed within a larger, earlier brick-arched opening (Plate 8). To the north of the fireplace is a cupboard with a pair of two-panel doors. The ceiling of this room is plastered and has collapsed.

The stairs to the first floor are located in the northwest corner of the north room (Plate 9). To the south of these is a small lobby or cupboard with a door.

The first floor is also divided into two rooms with the same proportions as the ground floor. The doorways into these rooms are not visible but must be in the northwest corner at the top of the stairs. The ceilings are at eaves level and are plastered; they have largely collapsed. There is a fireplace in the west wall of the south room. The upper courses of the south wall of the building have been refaced with brick finished with a cement render.

5.4 The roof (Plate 10)

The roof is supported on two trusses with principal rafters set into tie beams at eaves level. There is a single row of side purlins; these are both trenched into and laid onto the back of the principal rafters, and are nailed to the sides of the hip rafters. These and a ridge purlin support closely-spaced secondary rafters onto which battens are laid. Where visible all joints are nailed.

6. COMMENTS

- 6.1** The toll house was constructed in or shortly after 1765 when the Keyberry Bridge and Torquay Turnpike Trust was enacted. It was a small, two-storey, two-roomed building set within a small plot at the junction of two roads – Kingsteignton Road and Priory Road. The latter may have been constructed at the same time as the toll house since it cuts through a number of earlier fields, and there are no historic farms or settlements on the road for it to have served. (Abbotskerwell Priory was constructed in 1861 at the late 1840s Abbotskerswell House.) The toll house probably contained a large bay window on its east elevation overlooking Kingsteignton Road. Internally, it consisted of two rooms on each floor, with the larger principal rooms to the south being heated.
- 6.2** The toll house has been altered several times, most notably in the 20th century. The stone store on the west side is an early addition, and could be of 19th-century date. The north kitchen and west water closet extensions are probably contemporary, and may date to the 1950s. These, and the refurbishment of the ground-floor fireplace and associated chimney stack, can probably be seen in the context of the addition to the then domestic house of a tea room, perhaps with the front room becoming the tea room, the rear room being a private parlour with the kitchen moving to the new extension. The bay window may have been removed at this date, although this could have occurred earlier when the building ceased to become a toll house.

7. THE PROJECT ARCHIVE

- 7.1** The paper and digital archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service within three months of acceptance of the report.
- 7.2** An entry to the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS) has been created using the unique entry identifier 196313.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1** The investigation and report were commissioned by Galliford Try, and managed for them by Robert Dumelow and for AC archaeology by Simon Hughes. The fieldwork was carried out by Stella De-Villiers and Andrew Passmore. The report was written by Stella De-Villiers, with the illustrations prepared by Sarnia Blackmore. Thanks are due to the staff of Gilpin Demolition and Andrew McCarthy Ecology for their assistance on site, and to Stephen Reed (HET) and Paul Rainbird (AC archaeology) for providing historic photographs of the toll house. Plate 1 is reproduced courtesy of Marilyn Kenyon.

9. SOURCES CONSULTED

British Geological Survey online viewer, www.bgs.ac.uk

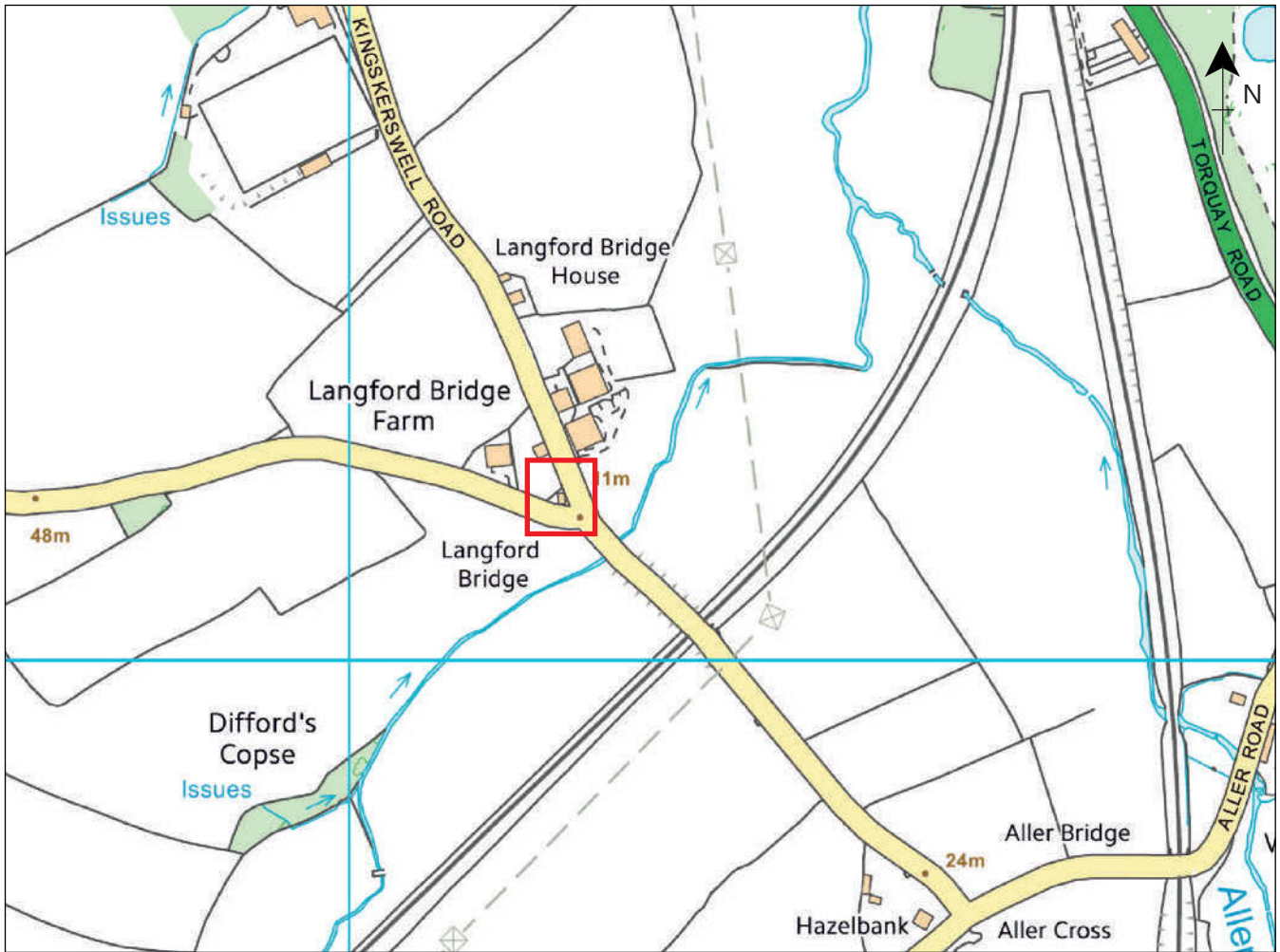
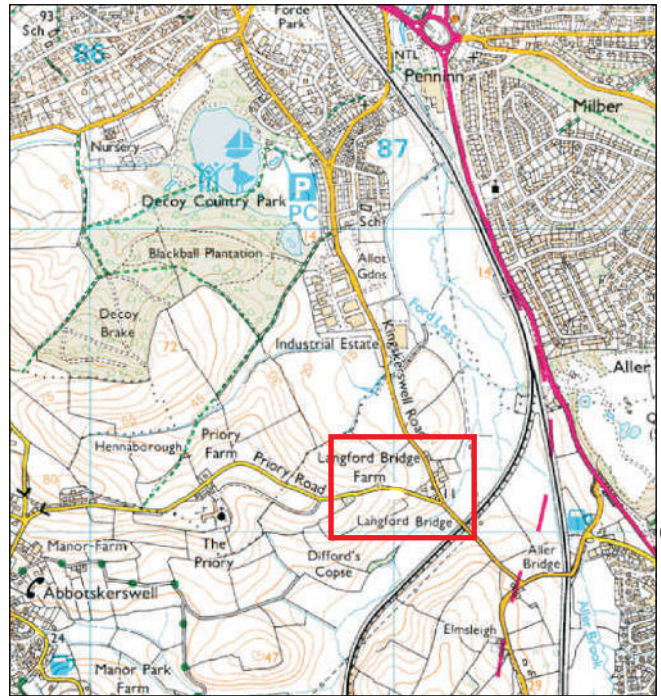
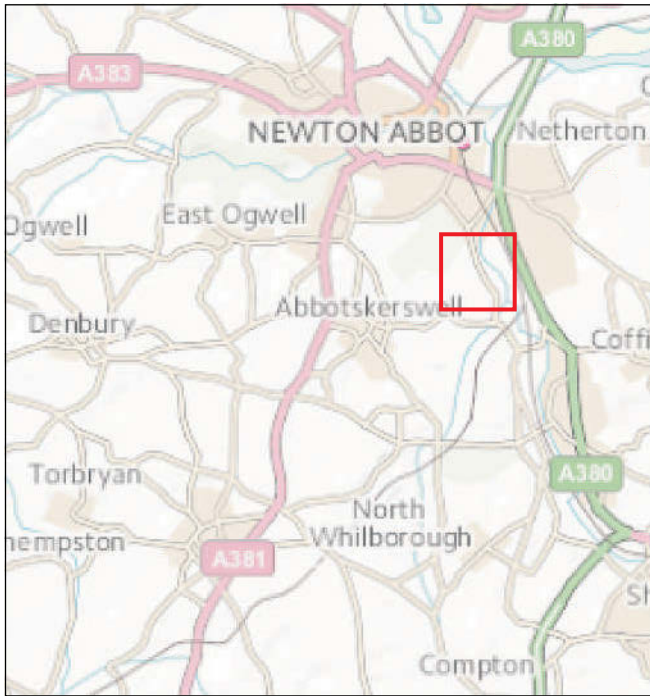
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PROJECT
The South Devon Link Road, Kingkerswell, Devon
- Decoy Industrial Estate Link Road

TITLE

Fig. 1: Location of site



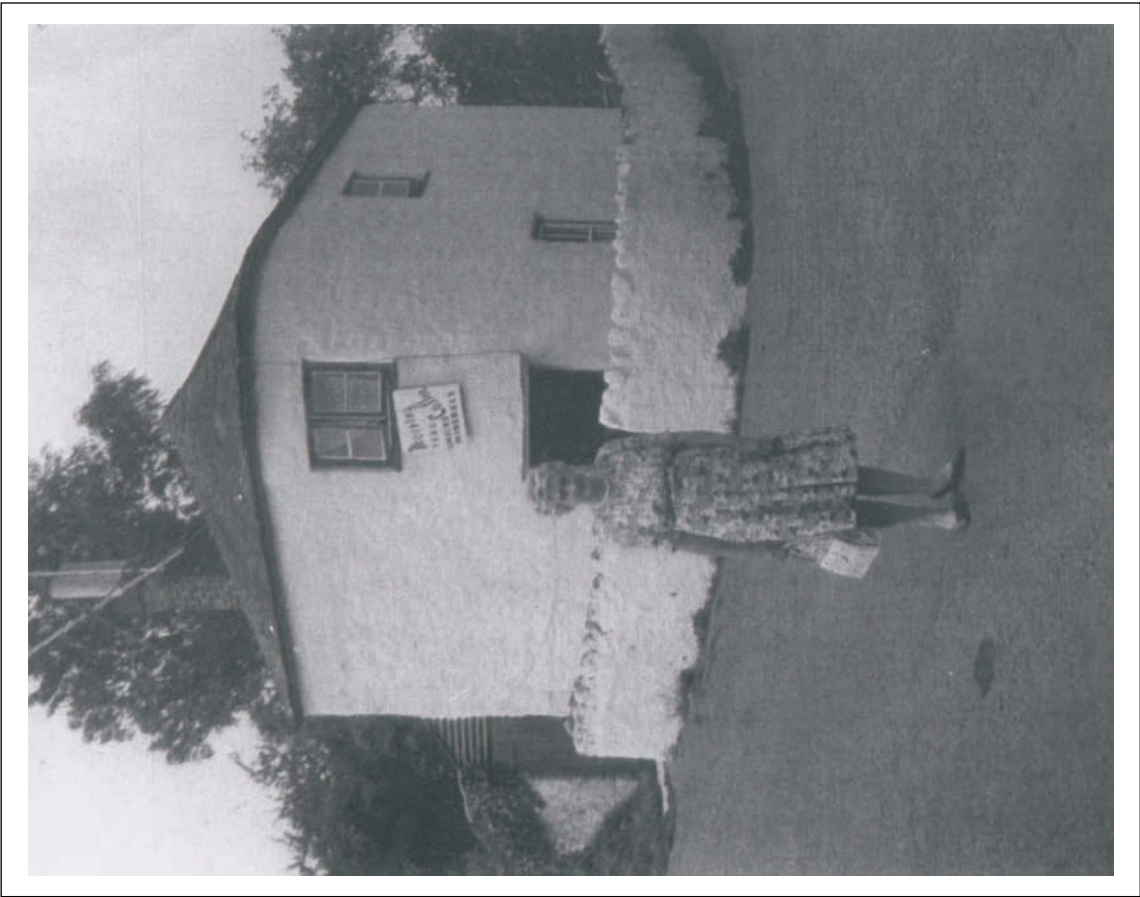


Plate 1: The toll house in the 1960s (courtesy Marilyn Kenyon)



Plate 2: The toll house prior to demolition, viewed from the southeast. 1m scale



Plate 3 : The north elevation following partial demolition of the kitchen extension, viewed from the northwest. 1m scale



Plate 4: The brick water closet, viewed from the west. 1m scale



Plate 5: The east elevation during demolition, viewed from the east.



Plate 6: The ground-floor openings in the east elevation, viewed from the southeast. 1m scale

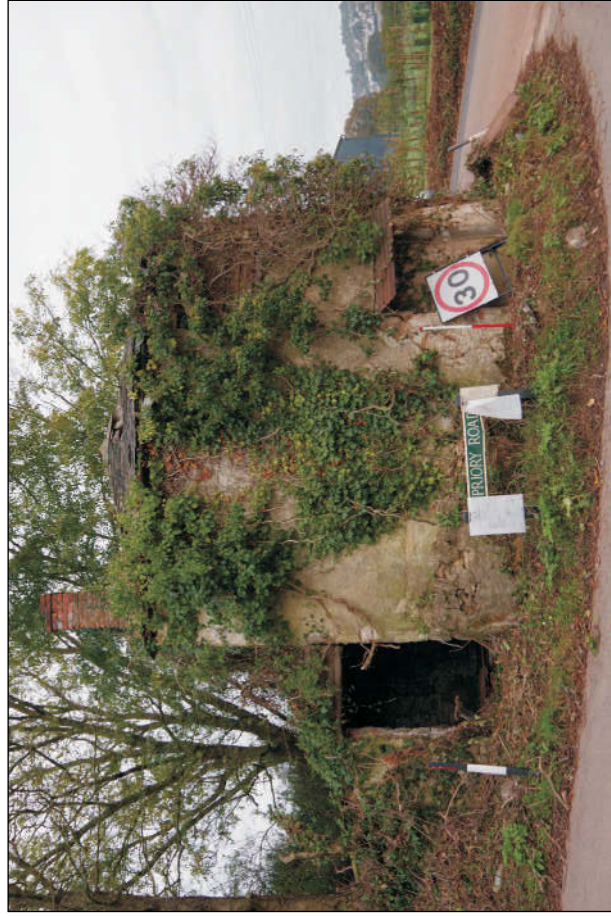


Plate 7: The south elevation, viewed from the south. 1m scale



Plate 8: The south room, viewed from the southeast looking in the front door



Plate 9: The stairs in the rear room, viewed from the east looking in the rear door



Plate 10: The southwest side of the roof during demolition showing exposed timbers, viewed from the southwest

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