

LAND AT DAWLISH WARREN, BEACH ROAD, DAWLISH WARREN, DEVON

(NGR SX 98314 78960)

Results of an archaeological watching brief

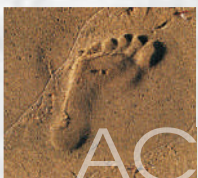
Teignbridge District Council planning reference
14/01746/FUL, condition 4

Prepared by:
Stella De-Villiers MA AlFA

On behalf of:
The Environment Agency

Document No: ACD991/2/0

Date: February 2015



archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Teignbridge District Council	National Grid Reference SX 98314 78960	Number: (Leave blank for HES to fill in)
Subject: Land at Dawlish Warren, Beach Road, Dawlish Warren, Devon		Photo attached? Y
Planning Application no: 14/01746/FUL	Recipient museum: RAMM, Exeter	
OASIS ID: 202486	Museum Accession no: RAMM 14/58	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD991	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 15 October 2014 – 10 December 2014	
<p>Description of works. An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AC archaeology on behalf of the Environment Agency during the construction of a permanent coastal flood defence scheme consisting of a timber clad sheet piles wall, landscaping enhancement and new timber walkway on land at Dawlish Warren. The works were required as a condition (4) of planning permission by Teignbridge District Council, following consultation with the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team.</p> <p>The site lies 500m to the northeast of Dawlish Warren and within the Dawlish Warren Nature Reserve which is located on a sand spit at the mouth of the Exe Estuary (Fig. 1). The scheme is set back from the beach and situated adjacent to the Dawlish Warren Visitors Centre within grass and scrub-covered sand dunes. The site lies at 3m aOD with the underlying solid geology comprising sandstone and subordinate breccia of the Exeter Group under a superficial deposit of blown sand (British Geological Society online viewer). The total area of the works was approximately 0.41ha.</p> <p><i>Historical background</i> While the sand spit at Dawlish Warren is the probable site of a managed rabbit warren dating to the medieval period (Devon Historic Environment Record MDV42068), other than the location of a 19th century rifle range (MDV55105) much of the history surrounding the specific area of the scheme dates from the Second World War. The scheme crosses the line of a former anti-invasion beach scaffolding alignment which was visible on a RAF aerial photograph (MDV73290). To the southwest of the site are the former locations of anti-aircraft obstructions (MDV73288) and a service building (MDV73287) as well as an extant pillbox (MDV39320).</p> <p><i>Aim</i> The aim of the watching brief was to preserve by record any archaeological features or deposits exposed during groundworks associated with the project. This was with particular reference for the potential for World War II remains to be present.</p> <p><i>Results (Plates 1-2)</i> The watching brief targeted areas of deepest excavation (up to 0.35m below current ground surface) of the groundworks, and the inspection of shallow scrapes which removed loose topsoil (up to 0.25m below current ground surface) down to a harder substrate. The topsoil – greyish brown loamy sand – contained organic material and modern finds. Below this, at depths of up to 0.35m below current ground surface, clean yellowish red sand was exposed. This was devoid of any archaeological features, and only voids representing rabbit burrows were noted. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were located.</p> <p><i>Comments</i> No archaeological features or deposits were exposed during the works. Most of the Second World War anti-invasion defences in the area were probably removed soon after the war, and any surviving remains of the beach scaffolding may have been removed when the ponds were excavated in the nature reserve during the second half of the 20th century. It is also possible that the line of the beach scaffolding was actually located very slightly to the west of the present scheme.</p> <p>This report and the associated OASIS entry represent the archive for the project.</p>		
<p>A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.</p>		
Recorder: Stella De-Villiers, AC archaeology		Date sent to HER: 13 February 2015

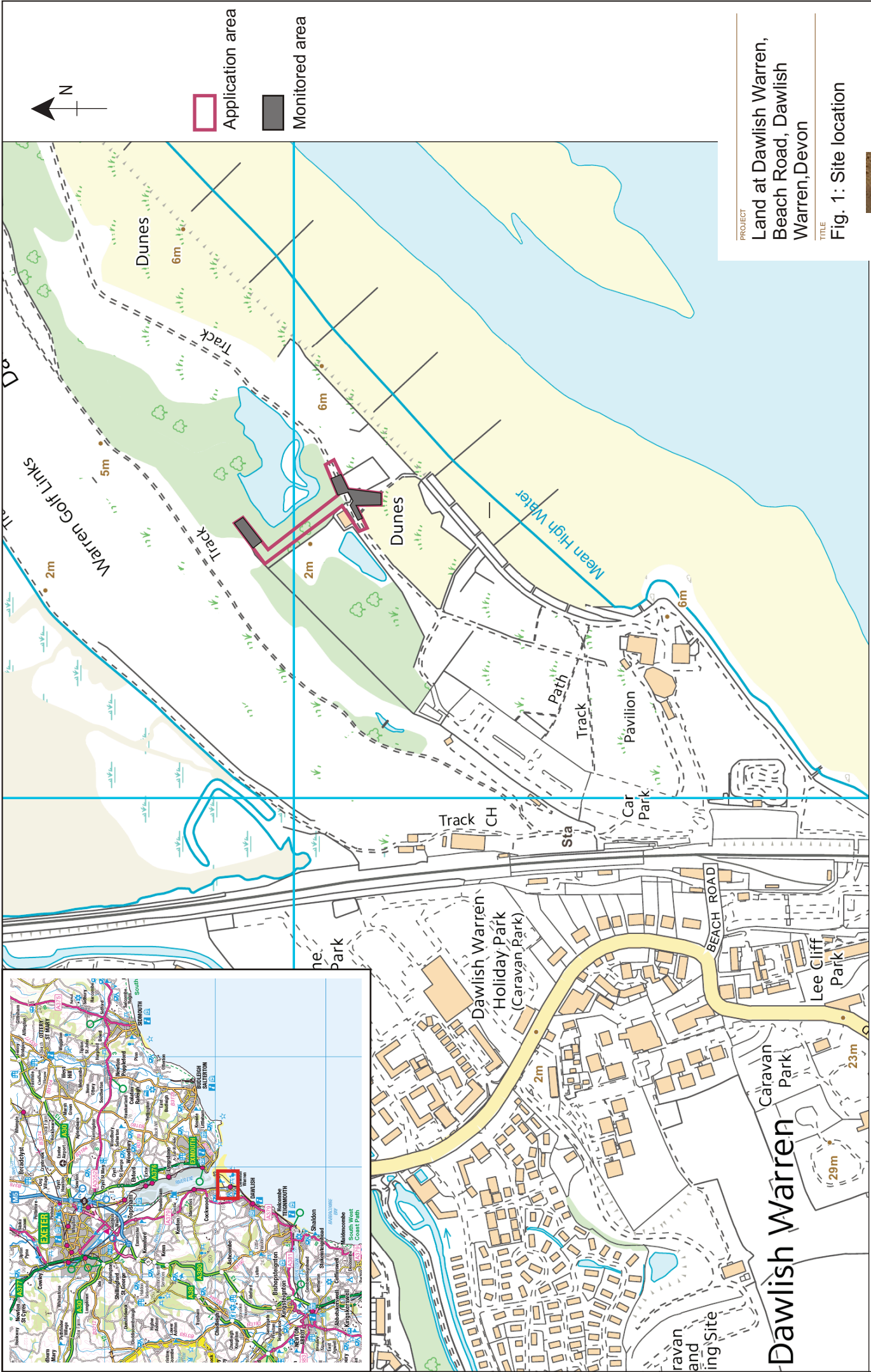




Plate 1: General view of works at the north end of site, from the south east



Plate 2: General view of works at the south end of site, from the south

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