

THE LAW LIBRARY, CATHEDRAL CLOSE, EXETER, DEVON

(NGR SX 92166 92608)

Results of an archaeological monitoring and recording

National Heritage List for England reference: 1104063

Prepared by:
Simon Hughes

Report No: ACD2156/1/0

Date: November 2019



archaeology

Exeter UAD – Recognition Event Data Sheet

Area (m2) 80

NGR Easting **292166** NGR Northing **092607**

NGR Qualifier: **GCE**. Event Type: **WB**.

Event Start: **15/10/2019**. Event End: **15/10/2019**

Site Name **The Law Library, Cathedral Close, Exeter**

Fieldworker Name **Simon Hughes**

Associated Organisation **AC archaeology**

Parish **St Peters**

Postal Address **The Medieval Hall, 8 Cathedral Close, Exeter EX1 1EZ**

Event Description (continue over if necessary)

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by AC archaeology following consultation with Historic England during the replacement of a floor surface at the Law Library, Cathedral Close, Exeter (SX 9289 9266). The site is situated on the northeast side of Cathedral Close between the Notaries House and the Choristers House, which fronts the street (Fig. 1).

The Law Library is Grade-I listed and with the adjacent properties extending from Cathedral Close forms part of what would have been a medieval tenement. This and the Choristers, which fronts Cathedral Close, date to the 15th century, while the Notaries House to the northeast is early 18th century and probably overlies what would have been service rooms of the late medieval house. The Law Library, which was originally used as an ecclesiastic court, comprises a grand hall with ornately carved 15th century roof (Plate 1). On the southeast wall is a fireplace, thought to have been inserted during the early 18th century.

Results

The monitoring was carried out during the replacement of the 20th century floor surface. This comprised the bulk reduction of the area by c.0.1m onto a light brown silty sand levelling layer that had common gravel and crushed mortar inclusions. In the area adjacent to the fireplace on the southeast side of the hall was a scatter of animal bone (Plate 2). A small quantity of window glass and a brick fragment were also recovered.

The Finds by Naomi Payne and Charlotte Coles

The collection of finds recovered from the levelling layer is summarised in Table 1, below.

Table 1. Summary of finds by context

Context	Context Description	Glass		CBM		Animal bone	
		No.	Weight (g)	No.	Weight (g)	No.	Weight (g)
101	Levelling layer	16	67	1	177	37	336

Glass by Naomi Payne

16 pieces (67g) of post-medieval window glass were recovered from the levelling layer. The transparent, slightly greenish glass pane fragments have a uniform thickness of 2.5mm, suggesting they post-date 1851. Four pieces have original straight edges present and one of these is a right-angled corner piece.

CBM by Naomi Payne

A fragment (177g) of post-medieval brick was recovered from the levelling layer. This is a piece of a hand-made sand-tempered brick of 18th-19th century date (pers. comm. Andrew Passmore). It has an original thickness of 51mm.

Animal bone by Charlotte Coles

37 pieces of animal bone (336g) were recovered from subsoil. These have good surface condition but are fragmentary. The species present are cattle, sheep/goat, pig, chicken and hare. Ribs and meat-baring bones are most common; no teeth or foot bones are present. Several of the bones have chop marks. The small collection represents a domestic waste assemblage.

Discussion

The replacement of the floor surface exposed a mixed levelling layer. Based on the window glass and brick fragment recovered, this is likely to have dated to the mid-19th century or later. The animal bone assemblage represents a range of commonly consumed animals and is likely to represent kitchen waste. The potential for earlier remains on the site were not exposed due to the shallow nature of the works.

This report represents the archive for the project.

Sample Deposit Column: N/A

NGR Easting 292166 NGR Northing 092607

Surface Level (m AOD) c. 43m Intervention to (m AOD) N/A

Water Level (m AOD): N/A

Principal Deposit Top (m AOD): c. 43m Principal Deposit Base (m AOD) not reached.

Geology: Sandstone of the Whipton Formation, beneath sand and gravel river terrace deposits

Listed Building PRN 1104063

Listed Building Grade I

Additional/Synthetic Information

Notes

NGR Qualifier from:

FCE Feature Centred GCE Group or Complex Centred FS Findspot LO Locality Only LIN Linear

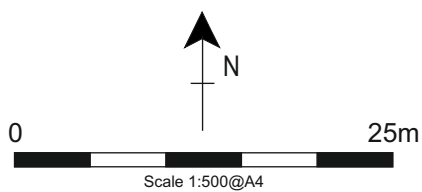
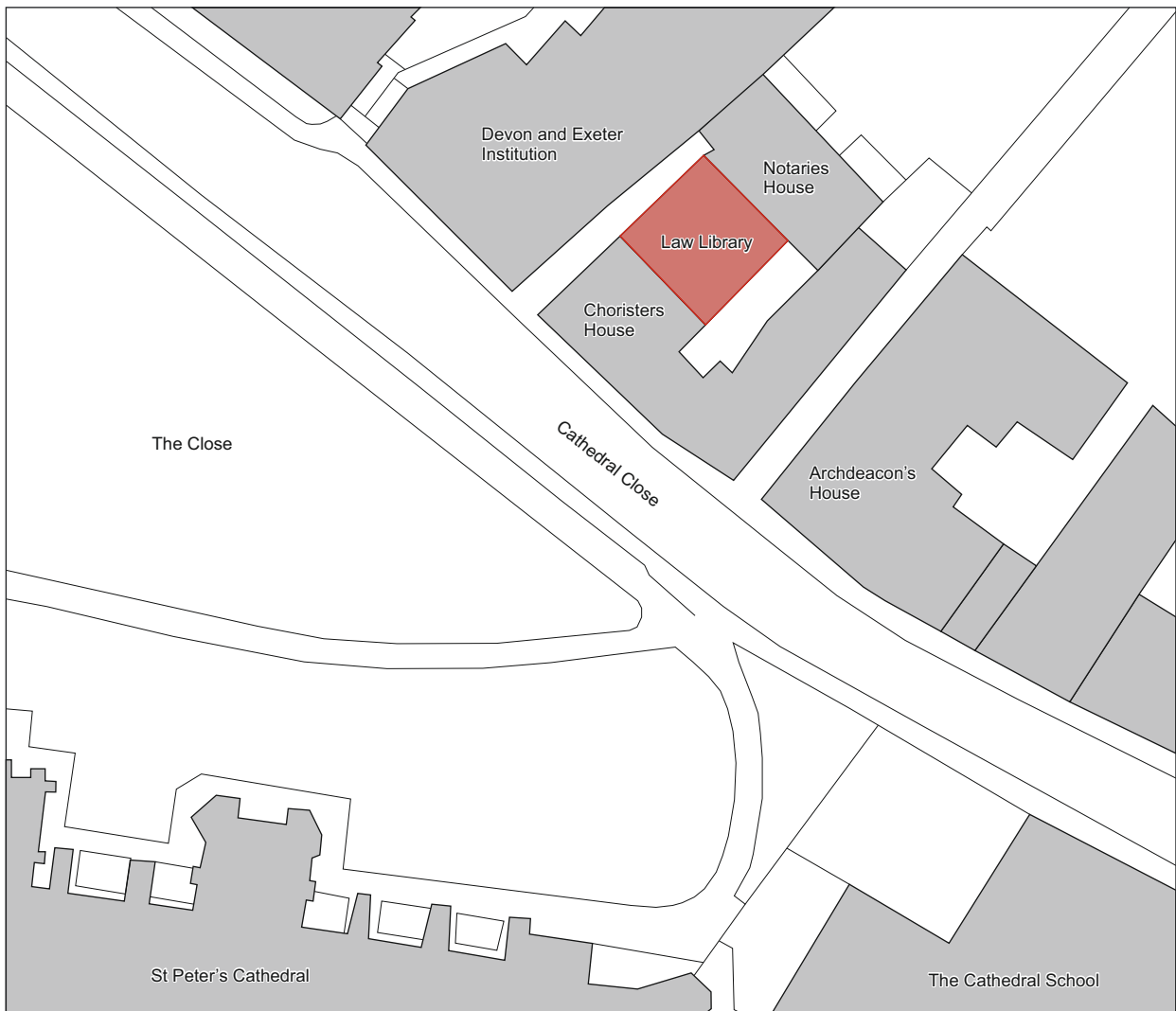
Event Type from:

AP Air photography AS Air Photo Survey BS Building Survey CS Geochemical Survey DR Documentary Record ES Environmental Sampling EV Evaluation EX Excavation FE Full Excavation FO Field Observation FS Full Survey FW Fieldwalking GS Geophysical Survey MS Photogrammetric Survey PE Part Excavation PHS Photographic survey PO Personal Observation PS Part Survey RO Recorded Observation SE Salvage Excavation SR Salvage Record TS Topographic Survey WB Watching Brief

Digital site plan to be attached.



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PROJECT

Law Library, Cathedral Yard, Exeter

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location





Plate 1: General view of former Law Library, looking east



Plate 2: Showing animal bone scatter adjacent to fireplace. View to southeast (scale 0.3m)

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