

The Manor House, North Street, Ottery St Mary, Devon

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording



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The Manor House, North Street, Ottery St Mary, Devon

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

for

Mr W. Coleridge

by



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Non-Technical Summary

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the erection of an orangery at The Manor House, North Street, Ottery St Mary (centred on NGR SY 09859 95623). Fieldwork was conducted over two days in February and March 2012. The project has been commissioned by Mr W Coleridge.

A desk-based assessment of the history of the Site's surroundings showed that it was close to the centre of historically documented medieval activity in Ottery St. Mary. However, discoveries from the fieldwork were limited to 19th and 20th century drains.

Amongst the very few finds were sherds of Willow pattern pottery and a complete ginger beer bottle dating to around 1900.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd (COAS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the erection of an orangery at The Manor House, North Street, Ottery St Mary (centred on NGR SY 09859 95623; hereafter referred to as the Site). Fieldwork was conducted over two days, on the 15th February and 1st March 2012. The project has been commissioned by Mr W Coleridge.

1.2 The archaeological work was required by the Local Planning Authority (East Devon District Council) as a condition of granting planning permission for the work (Planning Application No: 11/1240/FUL), as determined by Mr Stephen Reed (Archaeologist, Devon County Historic Environment Service). In an archaeological brief for archaeological monitoring and recording (ARCH/DM/ED/18087) he stated that:

“The proposed development is situated in an area of archaeological potential, lying within the historic core of the town adjacent to the Manor House a Grade II listed building dating to the 18th century, some 30m north of the 13th century parish church of St Mary a Grade I listed building and to the east of Chanters House a Grade II listed building. There is the potential for groundworks to expose archaeological features and for the recovery of significant artefacts associated with the long occupation of this area.”*

1.3 Given the archaeological and historic significance of these buildings, it was determined that a reasonable archaeological response in mitigation of the proposed works would be to carry out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording.

1.4 The requirement for the archaeological work follows advice given by Central Government as set out in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) and in the Local Development Framework Policy on Archaeology.

2. Site Location, Topography and Geology

2.1 Ottery St. Mary lies c. 8km south-west of Honiton, c. 7km north-north-west of the coastal town of Sidmouth and c. 7km east of the city of Exeter. The Site is on the north-west edge of the old town, c. 640m east of the River Otter, c. 6m west of Paternoster Road and c. 30m north of the Church of St. Mary, one of Devon’s finest ecclesiastical buildings. The ground is generally level at c. 63m above Ordnance Datum.

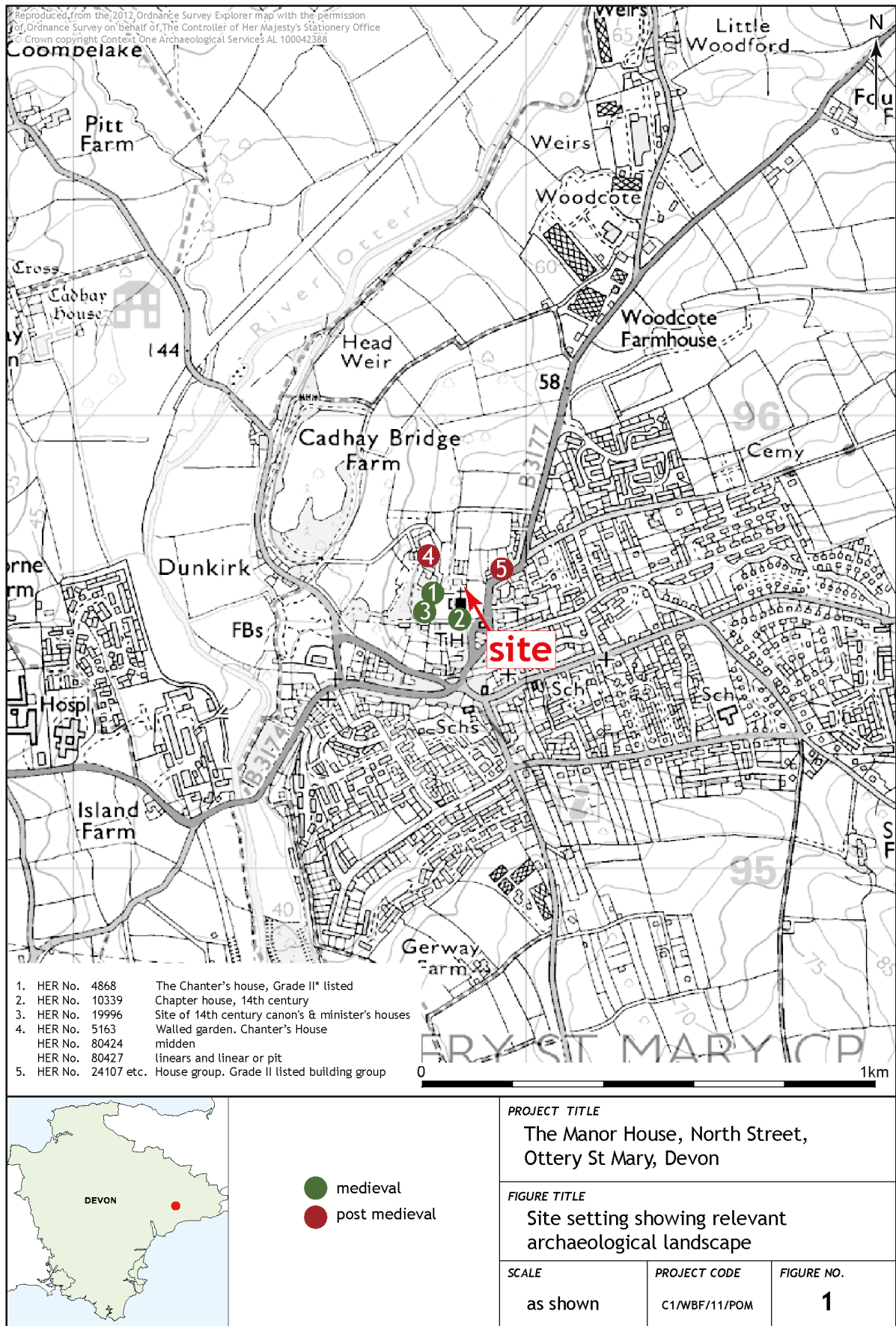
2.2 The Site lies on Otter Sandstone Formation Triassic Sedimentary Sandstone.

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 The archaeological background for the Site has been drawn from the Devon Historic Environment Record and online sources, notably ‘How Ottery began’ (OHS). The general location of known sites and finds is indicated on **Figure 1**.

Saxon (AD450 - 1065)

3.2 Ottery was a Saxon estate and a hundred, first recorded in AD963 (HER 63586), which included several settlements. In 1061 Edward the Confessor granted the manor and hundred to the canons of St Mary of Rouen (HER 17013).



Medieval (AD1066 - 1547)

- 3.3 A church was dedicated at Ottery St Mary in 1259 (**Figure 2, 1**), although it is speculated that there may have been one in the 11th century without reference to a particular site. The present building dates from the 14th to 16th centuries and was the seat of an ecclesiastical college from 1337 to 1545 (EH). During that period, wool and lace were Ottery St. Mary's trading staples. 'Othery sancti Mariae' had a monastery in the 13th century (HER 19992).
- 3.4 An evaluation within the walled garden at Chanter's House recovered 15th and 16th century pottery from linear features, c. 100m north-west of the Site (**Figure 1, 4**).

Post Medieval (AD1548 - 1800)

- 3.5 Chanter's House was the focus for a meeting between Oliver Cromwell and Thomas Fairfax, captain-general of the recently formed New Model Army in 1645 (HER 10322). In other respects, from the 17th century onwards, Ottery St Mary has served as the market centre for its rural hinterland (OHS).
- 3.6 A number of structures close to the Site have Grade II listed status, including a group in Paternoster Row (**Figure 1, 5**) and the walled garden of Chanter's House (**Figure 1, 4**), the latter including a midden incorporating varied 17th and 18th century finds (**Figure 1, 4**).
- 3.7 The present manor house was built mainly in the 18th and 19th centuries, replacing an extant 17th century building at 1 Sandhill Street (HER 24113). The Tithe apportionment shows its setting within plot 621 (**Plate 1**), described as 'House and offices' owned and occupied by Fras. Geo. Coleridge.



Plate 1. Detail from the Tithe Map of 1843

4. Methodology

Desk-based Appraisal

- 4.1 The programme of archaeological works commenced with desk-based research to place the Site into its historic and archaeological context. This included map regression based on the Ordnance Survey, Tithe maps and Apportionments, other records held at the Devon Record Office and online sources.

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording (Watching Brief)

- 4.2 A 360-degree tracked or JCB-type machine, fitted with a toothless grading bucket was used to remove the topsoil/overburden over the Site, and old pipe trenches were dug by hand under the supervision of COAS archaeological staff.
- 4.3 A suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist was on site to monitor all groundworks for the purpose of identifying and recording any archaeological remains, features and deposits present. Provision was made to allow extra time for the excavation and recording of any significant deposits or features revealed as a result of development groundworks. The spoil was examined for archaeological artefacts.
- 4.4 The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the codes, standards and guidelines set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 1985, rev. 2010; 1990, rev. 2008; 1994, rev. 2008) at all times during the course of the investigation. Current Health and Safety legislation and guidelines were followed on site.
- 4.5 All features/deposits were recorded using standard COAS pro-forma recording sheets. Stratigraphic relationships were recorded using a 'Harris-Winchester matrix' diagram. A photographic record of the work was prepared and involved the use of digital images. The photographic record included images of individual features, development excavation areas and working shots to illustrate the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5. Results

- 5.1 The deposits encountered during fieldwork are listed and described in Appendix 1. In the text, context numbers for layers and deposits appear in standard brackets, e.g. (102).
- 5.2 The new orangery and various service trenches butted against the south wall of the manor house and a garden wall adjoining from the east (**Plate 2**). The area was enclosed on all sides (**Plates 3 and 4**). A drainage plan of 1883 showed at least one feature which was encountered within the footprint of the new structure (**Plate 5**).

Soil sequence

- 5.3 The turf and topsoil comprised a darkish, slightly reddish brown sandy loam with sparse gritty to gravelly subangular stones (100) over a slightly less gravelly, but otherwise similar, subsoil (101) which sealed a natural of gravelly silty sand (102).
- 5.4 A number of twentieth century service pipes were exposed as well as brickwork interpreted as a 19th century drain (104) identified within the area of the orangery's footprint (**Plate 6**). To the west of the latter the removal of another drain provided a clear view of the overall soil sequence (**Plates 7 and 8**).

6. Finds

- 6.1 The finds consisted of three pieces of pottery, two adjoining sherds of Willow pattern (13g) and a complete stoneware bottle (509g), all from drain trench (104). The bottle is 167mm high, with an aperture diameter of 18mm and a base diameter of 72mm. On the body immediately above the base it is clearly stamped 'Bristol' with a barely legible mark above which may be 'Price', one of two companies which dominated this specialised industry in 19th century Bristol. The vessel has a close resemblance to bottles produced by Price in c. 1900 (Dowling 2012).

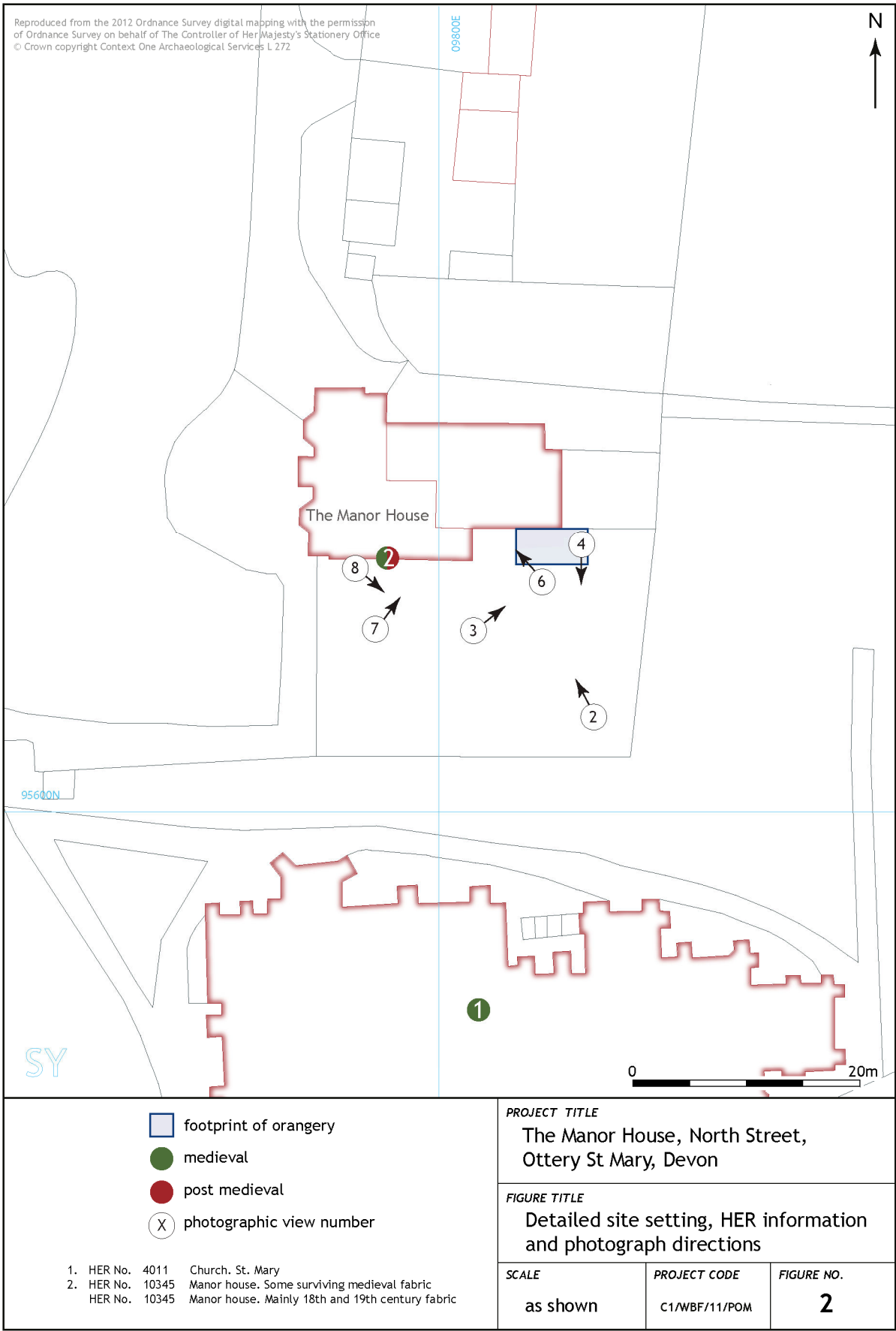




Plate 2. Site location (from SSE)



Plate 3. North and east garden walls (from WSW)



Plate 4. The Site and south garden wall (from N)

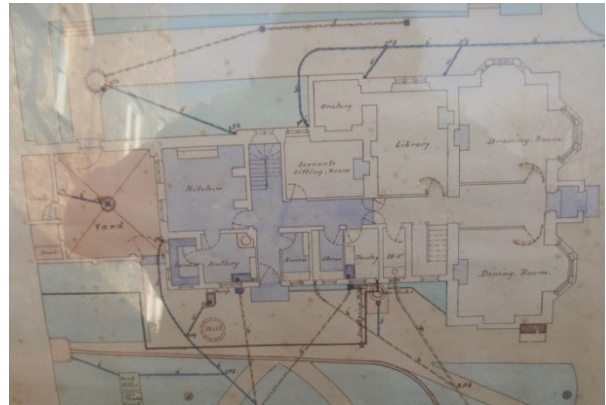


Plate 5. Drain plan of 1883 (S at top)



Plate 6. 19th century drain (from SE; 0.5m scale)



Plate 8. Drain trench profile (from NW; 0.5m scale)



Plate 7 Trench after removal of drain (from SW; 0.5m scale)

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The desk-based assessment has shown that the Site is close to the centre of historically documented medieval activity on the north-west side of the old town of Ottery St. Mary. However, monitoring of the groundworks has not uncovered any evidence of deposits or finds from that period. The topsoil and subsoil provide a combined coverage of around 30cm over the natural and it is possible that the ground was levelled to that surface in preparation for the building of the 18th century manor house, erasing shallow archaeological features or layers.
- 7.2 The fill of a brick drainage feature included a complete bottle dated to c. 1900, commensurate with a construction date which would allow it to be shown on a drainage plan of 1883. The orientation and location of a second drain trench clearly corresponds to the easternmost of two north-east to south-west oriented drains shown projecting from the south of the house on that plan (**Plate 5**).

8. Archive

- 8.1 The Site archive is currently held at the offices of Context One Archaeological Services Ltd and consists of 70 digital images in .jpg format, including two profile and context sheets and various registers. There were no scaled drawings due to the lack of significant archaeological features. The archive will be prepared to comply with guidelines set out in *Environmental Standards for the Permanent Storage of Excavated Material from Archaeological Sites* (UKIC 1984, Conservation Guidelines 3)/ *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage* (UKIC 1990)/ *Standards in the Museums Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission 1992)/ *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991). Arrangements will be made to deposit the archive with Royal Albert Memorial Museum within 12 months following the submission of this report.
- 8.2 Copies of the Watching Brief report will be deposited with:

The Manor House
North Street
Ottery St Mary
Devon
EX11 1DR

Royal Albert Memorial Museum
Queen Street
Exeter
Devon
EX4 3RX

9. COAS Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Context One Archaeological Services Ltd would like to thank Mr W. Coleridge for allowing access to his land during the fieldwork. We are also grateful to Mr Stephen Reed (Archaeologist, Devon County Historic Environment Service) for his advice.

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Appendix 1. Context Summary

Context no.	Period	Type	Description	Earlier than	Contemp. with	Later than	Length	Width/ Diameter	Thickness / Depth
100	Modern	Layer	Topsoil. Dark brown friable loam including <3% angular gritty to gravelly stone			101, 104			0.15mm
101	Modern	Layer	Subsoil. Dark brown friable loam including <2% angular gritty to gravelly stone	100, 104		102			0.20m
102	Geological	Layer	Natural. Yellowish, reddish, brown soft silty clay including gravel	101					0.20m exc
104	Modern	Fill	Drain. Drain exposed but cut not discernible	100		101			

Appendix 2. Devon Historic Environment Record report for archaeological events within the environs of the Site.

SMR No.	Description	NGR	Figure 1 & 2 refs
Medieval (AD1066 - AD1547)			
4011	Church. St. Mary. Collegiate church from 1337 to 1545	SY 09852 95580	Fig. 2, 1
4868	Building. The Chanter's house, Grade II* listed	SY 09798 95609	Fig. 1, 1
10339	Chapter house. 14 th century, serving college. Probably destroyed in 6 th century	SY 09852 95558	Fig. 1, 2
10345	Manor house. Some surviving medieval fabric. Considered to have formed part of collegiate complex	SY 0985 9562	Fig. 2, 2
19996	Site of 14th century canon's & minister's houses associated with College	SY 09785 95575	Fig. 1, 3
Post Medieval (AD1548 - AD1800)			
10345	Manor house. Mainly 18 th and 19 th century fabric	SY 0985 9562	Fig. 2, 2
5163	Walled garden. Chanter's House, 18 th to 19 th century	SY 09786 95689	Fig. 1, 4
24107 etc.	House group. Grade II listed building group comprising seven houses, six of 18 th century date, one of early 19 th century. EH building ID: 397936 etc.	SY 0995 9566	Fig. 1, 5
80424	Midden. Deposit including 17 th and 18 th century pottery, tile and glass	SY 09778 95698	Fig. 1, 4
80427	Linears and linear or pit. Some including 15 th and 16 th century pottery, some 18 th and 19 th century pottery	SY 09786 95689	Fig. 1, 4