

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish: Bovey Tracey	National Grid Reference: SX 80988 77832	Number: (Leave blank)
Subject: Longston Cross, Challabrook, Bovey Tracey, Devon		Plan/Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 20/00606/LBC	Recipient museum: No archive	
OASIS ID: contexto1-397183	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference code: C1/AMR/20/CBD	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 10 th May 2022	
<p>Introduction:</p> <p>Context One Heritage & Archaeology (C1) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of Listed Building Consent (20/00606/LBC) for the relocation of Longston Cross, a Grade II Listed medieval cross (List entry no. 1165056) encompassed within a new development (planning reference: 17/01821/MAJ) on land to the west of Monks Way, Challabrook, Bovey Tracey (the 'Site') (Figure 1). The project was commissioned by Devonshire Homes.</p> <p>The monitoring and recording was requested by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Teignbridge District Council (TDC), on the advice of Marrina Neophytou, Historic Environment Officer, Historic Environment Team:</p> <p><i>"Challabrook Cross is a grade II listed medieval granite cross located on the Challabrook Stream a tributary to the River Bovey. The Historic Environment Team welcome the proposed works to ensure the survival and enhancement of this designated heritage asset as part of the overall development of the area. The cross is currently located where associated works are planned following consent being granted for 156 dwellings, known as Land to the west of Monks Way, Bovey Tracey (17/01821/MAJ). There is the possibility that something was deposited below the cross when it was relocated. As such, groundworks for the construction of the proposed development have the potential to expose and destroy archaeological and artefactual deposits associated with this heritage asset."</i></p> <p>Historic England (HE) were also consulted regarding the scheme. Rhiannon Rhys (Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas, HE) advised that the new location for the cross should be as close to its existing context as possible.</p> <p>The history of the cross is set-out in a Heritage Statement prepared by GJR Conservation (March 2020). An account also appears in Harrison's book 'Dartmoor Stone Crosses'. The Royalist officer referred to in the list entry was supposedly called Longston and following his death at the battle of Bovey Heathland his men utilised the old cross to mark the grave of their popular officer (Harrison 2001, 155). Subsequently it is presumed to have been used as a gatepost at Challabrook Farm, and in 1923 was 'rescued, restored and re-sited to its current location by a Mr A. J. Wyatt' (Harrison 2001, 155). As such, the cross appears to have been moved at least three or four times.</p> <p>Results:</p> <p>Prior to the commencement of the re-location, the cross was protected with polystyrene sheets held in place with strapped timber (Figure 2). A JCB-type machine equipped with a toothless grading bucket excavated the ground on the south-east side of the cross, which was then hand-cleaned to fully expose the stone (Figure 3). The cross was extracted from the ground using lifting gear attached to two JCB-type machines, and then laid on a pallet. The remaining faces were hand-cleaned (Figures 4-6). No marks were visible beyond a square socket on the side that had been facing north-east (Figure 5). The cross tapers progressively towards the base, the bottom 0.20m roughly shaped to form a triangle.</p> <p>The void left by the cross was hand-cleaned. No archaeology was identified, the deposit sequence comprising 0.60m of the same soft, light brown sandy silt that had surrounded the cross, above 0.30m of friable brown sandy silt, overlying blue-grey clay natural (Figure 7). The cross had been pressed slightly into the natural clay.</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <p>Lifting of the cross revealed a tapered base suggesting that the buried end was always the base, and that the sides formerly facing north-west and south-east were the primary faces while those formerly orientated towards the south-west and north-east were the sides. The small square socket is on the same side as the two rusty hangers and cut-back area previously recorded on the right-hand side, probably for hanging a gate; the left hand side and head showed much weathering (GJR Conservation 2020, 7). No evidence of the incised crosses supposedly carved on the south-east face were evident, however the part of the cross exposed during the re-location was probably always below ground. The cross has been re-sited c. 50m to the south-west, on a public space adjacent to the diverted Public Right of Way. An interpretation panel is being installed to provide a summary history. Examination of the void left by the cross did not encounter any objects associated with the 1923 re-siting, and the backfilled soil matched that of the adjacent ground.</p>		
Recorder: Cheryl Green, Context One Heritage and Archaeology		Date sent to HER: 26/05/2022

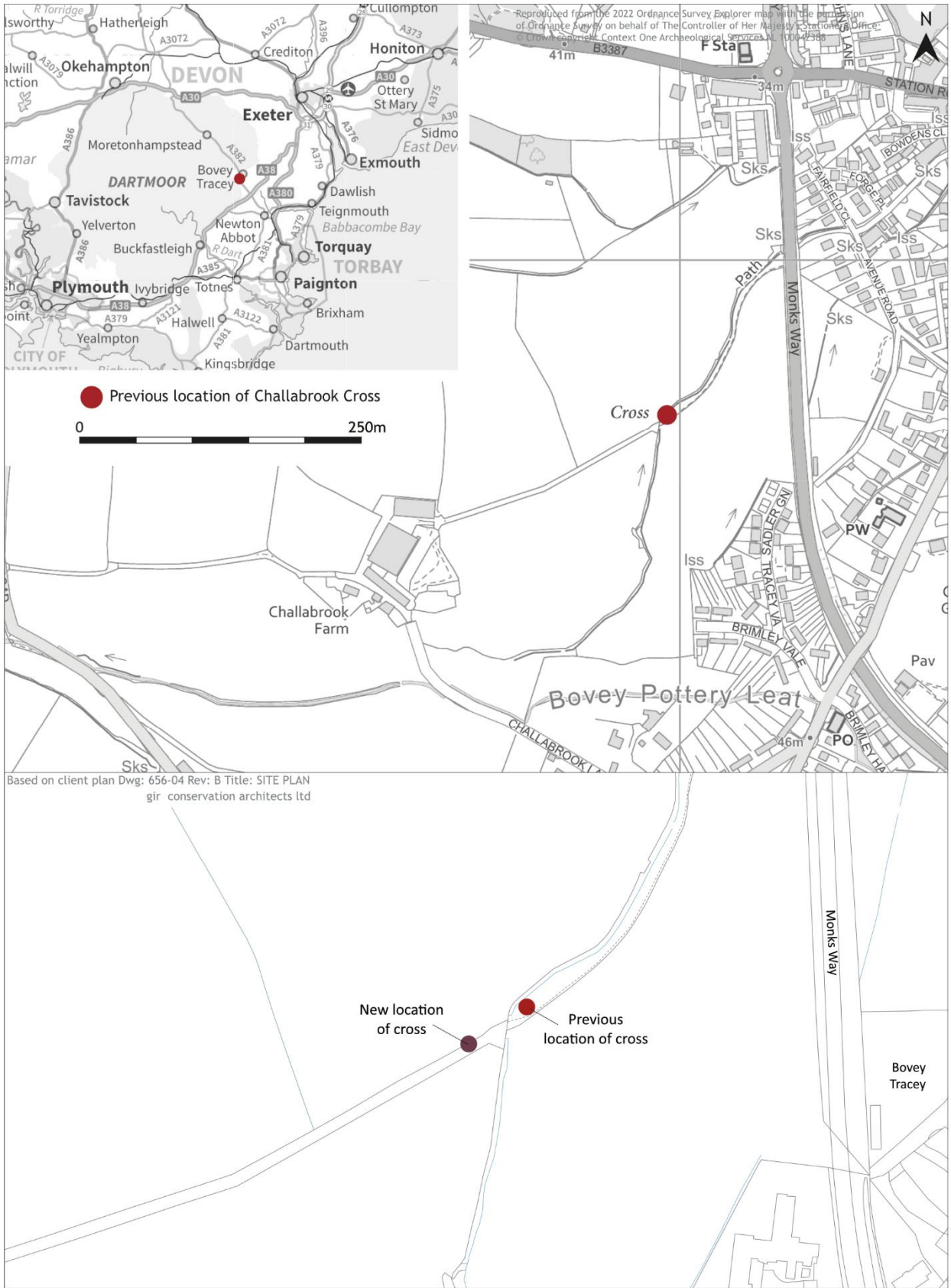


Figure 1. Site setting showing previous location of cross & new position



Figure 2. Excavation on SE side of cross before removal (looking NW; 1m scale)



Figure 3. SE face of cross below ground level (looking NW; 1m scale)



Figure 4. SW face of cross following removal (1m scale)



Figure 5. NE face of cross following removal (1m scale)



Figure 6. NW face of cross following removal (1m scale)



Figure 7. Void following cross removal (looking NW; 1m scale)

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