

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Sidbury / East Devon	<b>National Grid Reference</b> 315196, 95261	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Archaeological recording in drainage ditch after construction of agricultural livestock building at Middle Knapp Farm, Sidbury Sidmouth EX10 0QG		<b>Photo attached?</b> Y
<b>Planning Application no:</b> <u>11/2342/FUL</u>	<b>Recipient museum:</b> No archive	
<b>OASIS id:</b> arrowhea1-116389	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> N/A	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b>  AA 154	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b>  23 December 2011	
<p><b><u>SUMMARY</u></b></p> <p>There is no indication in the archaeological record of use of the land (centred on NGR 315196, 95261) prior to the construction of the agricultural livestock building other than in the post-medieval – modern period. There is no residual material of medieval or earlier date, and no finds were present in the sections exposed in the ditch sides or on spoil heaps of topsoil and building material.</p> <p><b><u>DESCRIPTION</u></b></p> <p>Arrowhead Archaeology was instructed by Dr Marian Dixon (Countryside Consulting Ltd) on behalf of the land owner, Mr Barry Fowler, to undertake archaeological works after construction of the agricultural building (Plate A) prior to grant of planning consent, to remedy incomplete adherence to specialist advice offered to East Devon District Council planners by Mr Stephen Reed of Devon County Council Historic Environment Service (HES Arch/dm/ed/18263a). Under the circumstances, work summarised below was conducted in accordance with a proposal by the writer to Ms Marrina Neophytou, subsequent to discussion on the telephone, in an email dated 22 December 2011. Monitoring and recording took place on 23 December 2011.</p> <p>The area in which the agricultural building is situated was formerly occupied by a farmhouse which had been demolished prior to construction. It lies on level land to the south of a group of tumuli on Grittisham Hill, the nearest to the development area being Ring-in-the-Mire tumulus some 200 m to the northeast (Fig. 1). Gradiometer survey undertaken by Substrata in the field to southwest of the building site in early December 2011 detected a few weak anomalies weak which might be of archaeological origin, of possible prehistoric date; these have not been sampled by excavation.</p> <p>On 23 December 2011, the building had been erected, and a drainage ditch on the west and north sides of the building (Fig. 2) to drain surface water and water from roof gutters away from the building area had been mechanically excavated using a toothless bucket. Archaeological observation comprised cleaning down the outer sides of drainage ditch, with subsequent recording. In all, some 43 m of ditch section was cleaned and recorded; and spoil heaps of machined topsoil also scanned for finds. The ditch had been recently and skilfully dug, with fresh sides exposed; the ditch was 1.8 – 2 m wide and 140 – 180 cm deep,</p> <p>The outer sections of both stretches of the drainage ditch were trowelled down; in the northern ditch. Hand cleaning was to the bottom of the ditch, but restricted to 80 cm below surface level in the western ditch except where possible cuts were present. Topsoil was present except in the southern end of the western side to a depth of 45 cm, comprising a mid to dark grey clay loam; this was underlain by a layer 25 cm thick of mid grey clay loam with admixed natural clay, representing the soil bursting zone. Natural subsoil was orange clay with varying amounts of frost shattered greyish white impure flint with a thin chalky cortex, to a maximum size of 40 x 40 cm. In the southern end of the western ditch (Fig. 2), the area had been heavily disturbed, with topsoil absent and replaced by a recent layer of redeposited topsoil containing frogged brick, slate etc., thus raising the ground level by some 20 cm (Plate D). This partially overlay a 'cut' of probable modern date (below).</p> <p>Where datable, modern features only were present. The northern ditch cut a French drain of V-shaped profile, 100 cm deep and c. 65 cm wide below the topsoil, and filled with flint nodules to 12 cm diameter in a matrix of grey silty clay (Plate B). To its north was a drain consisting of modern ridge tile on a slate base, in a cut 90 cm deep and 120 cm wide in section, filled with topsoil (Plate B). A similar drain was present at the northern end of the western trench (Fig. 2, Plate C), where polished</p>		

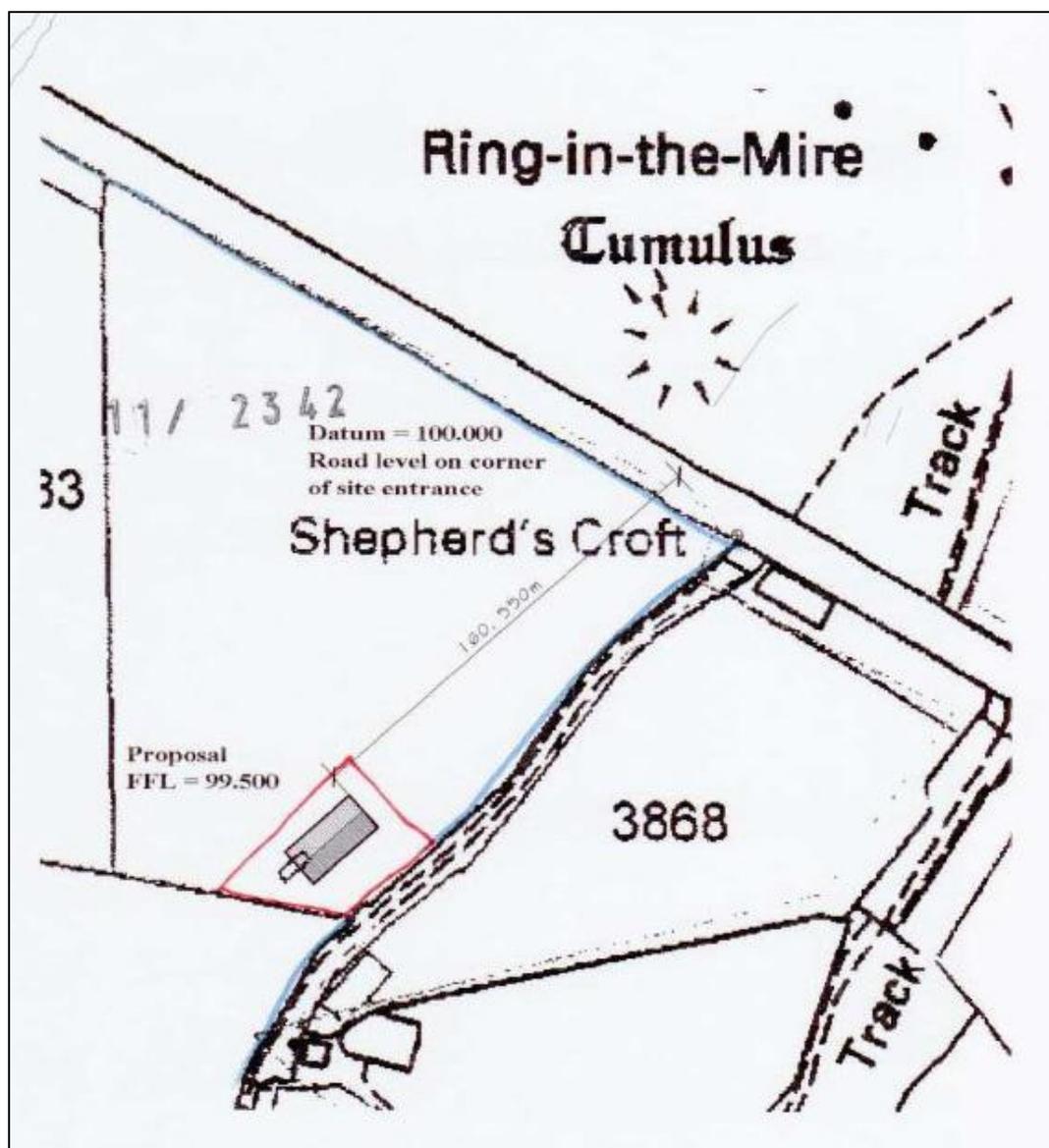
ridge tile 5 ½ inches wide at the bottom rested on slate 6 ½ inches wide and 3 mm thick; the cut was of U-shaped profile, 90 cm deep and 80 cm wide, filled with topsoil. The ceramic drains would not have met at right angles. In the southern end of the western trench, a possible cut was present, 3.5 m N-S, with sides at c. 45 degrees and a flat bottom (Plate D). This was filled by sterile layers of pale grey clay, and grey clay with bands of small pebbles, overlain by redeposited natural clay. There was nothing to suggest that this was anything other than of recent origin, and is likely to have been associated with the stone building demolished before construction of the agricultural building now standing, or may have been an infilled tree bowl, pond or similar. This section of this ditch was also extensively disturbed to the south of the 'cut'.

The surfaces of the spoil heaps were visually scanned; no artefacts were present other than occasional pieces of modern brick

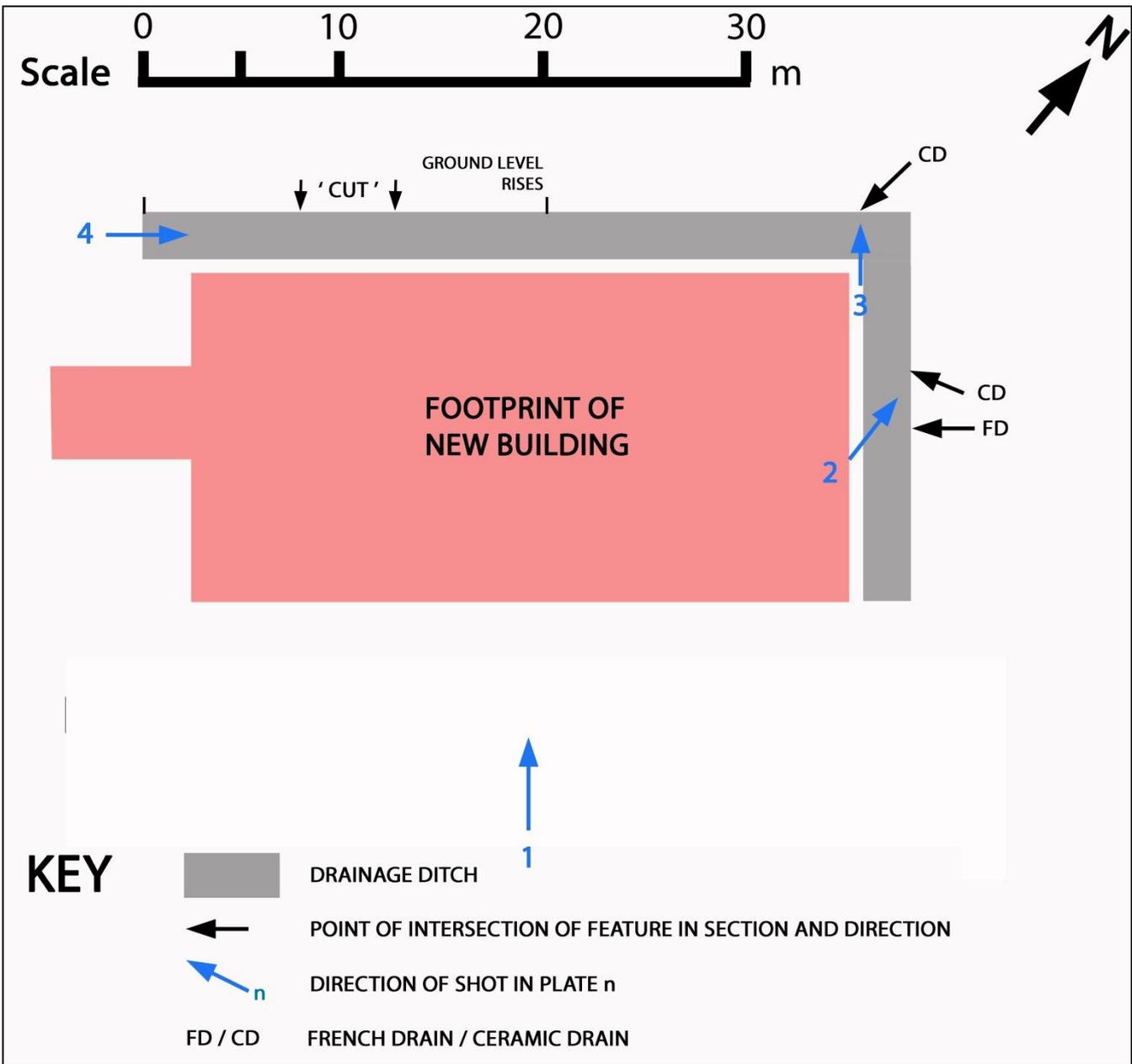
Arrowhead Archaeology retains site records and photographs. This report is lodged on OASIS and the Devon Historic Environment Record

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Dr Marian Dixon of Countryside Consulting Ltd for instructing Arrowhead Archaeology in this matter, on behalf of Mr Barry Fowler. Fig. 1 is an application drawing used by kind permission of Dr Dixon.



**Fig. 1** Location plan, used by permission of Countryside Consulting Ltd



**Fig. 2** Plan showing footprint of new building, drainage ditches, features and lines of view of Plates and their numbers



**PLATES** (see Fig. 2 for positions and angles)

- A New agricultural building from south. Drainage ditches lie to right and behind.
- B Eastern section of northern ditch, showing French (right) and Ceramic (left) drains
- C Ceramic drain in western section of western ditch. Black part of scale is 50 cm.
- D Western ditch showing rise in ground level, and position of 'cut' (in front of scale. Scale is 2 m.

**A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.**

**Recorder:**  
C.P. Clarke (Arrowhead Archaeology)

**Date sent to HER:**

5 January 2012