WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Woodlands, Tudhoe Village,
County Durham

NGR: NZ 26044 35463

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (Durham Office)
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Client: GOC Construction Management

PCA Report Number: 14971
PCA Site Code: TVD22
Planning Application: DM/19/00816
Oasis ID: preconst1-507178

LOCATION

Planning Authority: Durham County Council
Parish: Spennymoor
Site address: Woodlands, Tudhoe Village, Spennymoor, County Durham, DL16 6LE

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:

Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of 7 apartments and 2 two storey dwellings (Planning Reference: DM/19/00816) at Woodlands, Tudhoe Village, Spennymoor, County Durham, centred at National Grid Reference NZ 26044 35463 (Figure 1). Pre-Construct Archaeology were commissioned by GOC Construction Management limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief in association with the construction of House B within the eastern part of the overall proposed development (Figure 2).

At the time of the archaeological brief work the site was occupied by a mixture of hardstanding areas including gravel and concrete, vegetated areas comprising grass, shrubs and mature trees. The derelict remains of the former residential property 'Tudhoe Villa' had been demolished. This phase of archaeological watching brief work involved the monitoring and recording of the new build footprint of House B that had dimensions of *c*. 15m NW-SE by *c*. 11.50m NE-SW (Figure 3).

REASON FOR WATCHING BRIEF:

The site is of archaeological interest as it lies within the core of Tudhoe Village, a probably medieval village (HER D5703). The layout of Tudhoe Village comprises a village green that runs from the north-west to south-east with rows of three common fields with houses on either side of the village green. This is a common form of village layout in County Durham known as a two-row green village and is likely to be medieval in origin.

Tudhoe is not mentioned in the Boldon Book (1173) with the earliest reference to Tudhoe is a document from the rein of King John *c*. 1200 where Emma de Bulmer, daughter of the Lord of Brancepeth and widow of Geoffrey de Neville, granted the whole of Tudhoe village to Robert fitz Meldred, Lord of Raby, who had married Emma's daughter Isabellah.

Post-medieval mapping evidence depicts the site as being largely open ground until the 1890s with the exception of a small rectangular structure depicted on the Ordnance Survey of 1861 within the central portion of the site. The Ordnance Survey 1861 map also depicts narrow plots of land extending to the south-west from the village green that represent a system of medieval burgage plots. By the time of the Ordnance Survey 1897 a large single dwelling 'Tudhoe Villa' is depicted within the north-western part of the site. The derelict remains of Tudhoe Villa recently occupied the site and was subsequently demolished prior to the commencement of the current development.

Subsequent mapping evidence indicate that the site has remained largely unchanged with the exception of the eastern part of the site that had been cleared of dense woodland and a large concrete slab constructed. The function of the concrete slab is uncertain.

Until recently the site was occupied by woodland. Although trees may have disturbed any potential archaeological remains, it was considered that medieval remains relating to the village could potentially be encountered during the development.

Archaeological work provides potential opportunities to address key research objectives as set out in shared Visions: The North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (NERRF) (Petts & Gerrard 2006). The NERRF highlights the importance of research as a vital element of development-led archaeological work. It sets out key research priorities for all periods of the past so that all elements of commercial archaeological work can be related to wider regional and national priorities for the study of archaeology and the historic environment.

The NERRF Research Strategy for the medieval period has identified Key Research Themes which address a range of archaeological topics. The site is situated within the core of Tudhoe Village, the layout of which is a two-row green village, a form that is typical of the medieval period with the village likely to be medieval in origin. The archaeological work has the potential to provide a contribution to all of these Key Research Themes:

MDi. Settlement;
MDii. Landscape;
MDiii. Urbanism;

MDvi. Death and burial;
MDvii. Medieval ceramics and other artefacts;
MDviii. Other medieval industries;
MDix. Trade and economy.

The scope of works for the archaeological watching brief were set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) compiled Pre-Construct Archaeology and approved by the Durham County Council Archaeology Section prior to the commencement of work.

DATES WORK UNDERTAKEN:

Archaeological work was undertaken at the site on the following dates:

Monday 28/03/2022
Tuesday 29/03/2022

RESULTS:

During the archaeological investigation, separate stratigraphic entities were assigned unique and individual context numbers, which are indicated in the following text as, for example [123]. The archaeological sequence is described by placing stratigraphic sequences within broad phases, assigned on a site-wide basis in this case. An attempt has been made to add interpretation to the data and correlate these phases with recognised historical and geological periods.

The footprint of the new build residential dwelling (House B) was excavated using a tracked 360˚ 14-tonne mechanical excavator utilising a toothless ditching bucket (Plates 1 & 2).

Three phases of activity were encountered: Phase 1: Natural superficial geology, Phase 2: undated features and Phase 3: Modern.

Phase 1 represents superficial geological deposits that was exposed across the area under investigation. The geological material comprised firm brownish pink clay [101] that was encountered at maximum and minimum heights of 94.75m AOD and 94.38m AOD, respectively. These sedimentary deposits are glaciogenic in origin created by the action of ice and meltwater associated with glacial and inter-glacial periods during the Quaternary (British Geological Survey website).

Two undated ditches [103] & [105] (Phase 2) were recorded within the north-eastern corner of the area under investigation (Figure 3). A NW-SE aligned Ditch [103] was exposed for a distance of 2.20m and had a rounded terminus to the northwest. It was up to 0.82m wide by up to 0.31m deep and was encountered at a maximum height of 94.48m AOD. Its single fill comprised friable mid grey silty clay [102] from which no finds were recovered. A bulk environmental sample (Sample 1) was processed from ditch fill [102] from which no ecofacts of palaeoenvironmental significance were recovered (Appendix 4).

Immediately to the south of ditch [103] a shallow NW-SE aligned ditch [105] was exposed for a distance of 5.80m. It was up 0.49m wide by up to 60mm deep and was encountered at a maximum height of 94.41m AOD. No datable material was recovered from its single friable mid grey silty clay fill [104].

Although no datable artefactual material was recovered from any of the Phase 2 ditches their form and the composition of their fills suggest a medieval origin. The ditches probably represent either boundary or drainage features forming part of a burgage plot boundary extending south-westwards from the village green. Alternatively, the ditches could represent activity located within the burgage plot itself.

Phase 2 features were directly overlain by a modern made ground deposit (Phase 3) that comprised up to 0.50m thick friable mid greyish brown clayey silt [100] and contained frequent quantities of brick rubble throughout.

No further work is required on the information recovered during the watching brief, with the Site Archive (including this report), forming the permanent record of the strata encountered.

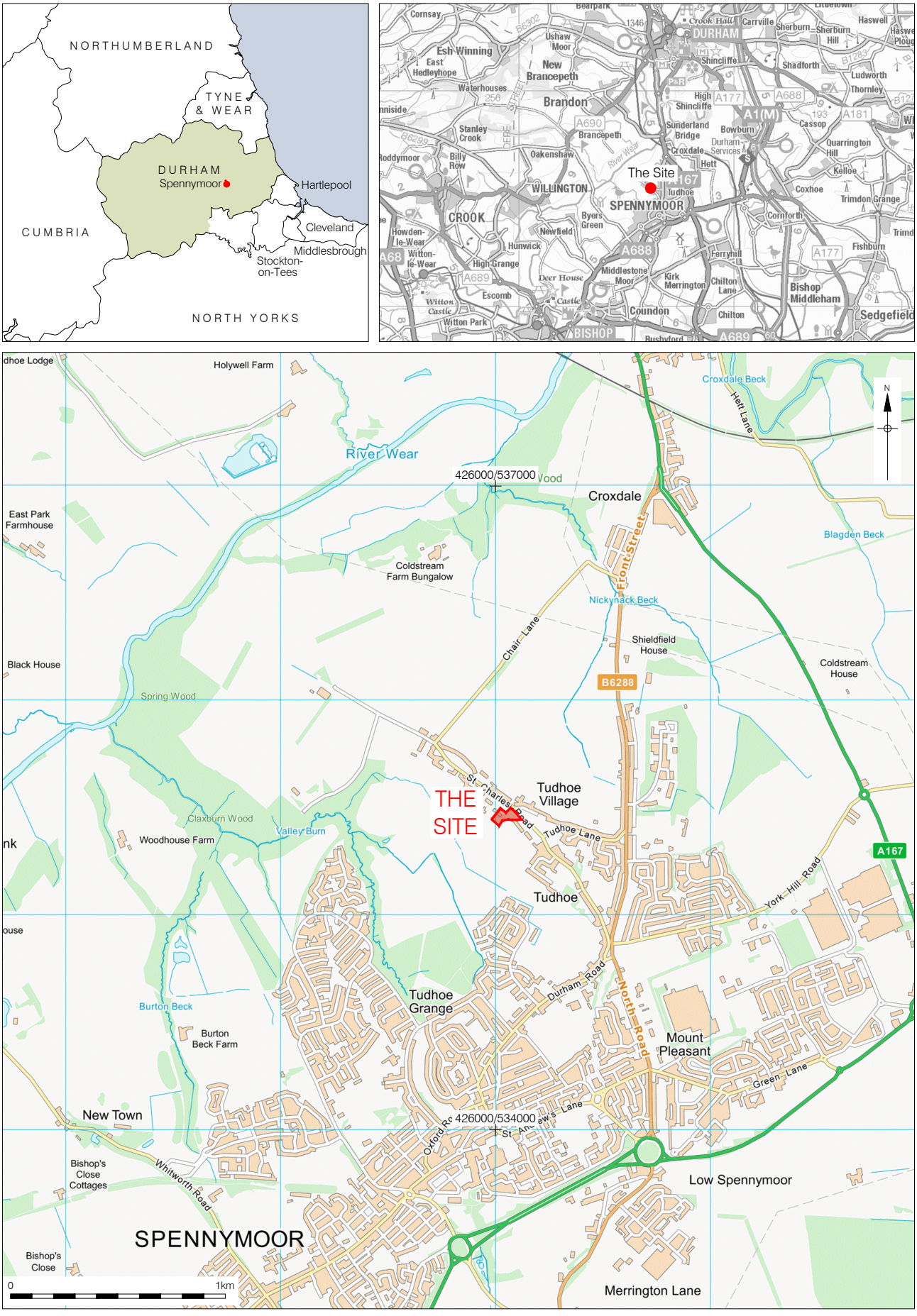
ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION:

Figure 1- Site Location
Figure 2- Detailed Site location
Figure 3- Area 1 Plans and Sections
Appendix 1- Plates
Appendix 2- Context Register
Appendix 3- Stratigraphic Matrix
Appendix 4- Palaeoenvironmental Assessment

ARCHIVE DEPOSITION:

All documentation resulting from this project will be archived internally by PCA.

Author: Aaron Goode
Checked: Aaron Goode
Authorised: Aaron Goode
Date: 07/06/2022

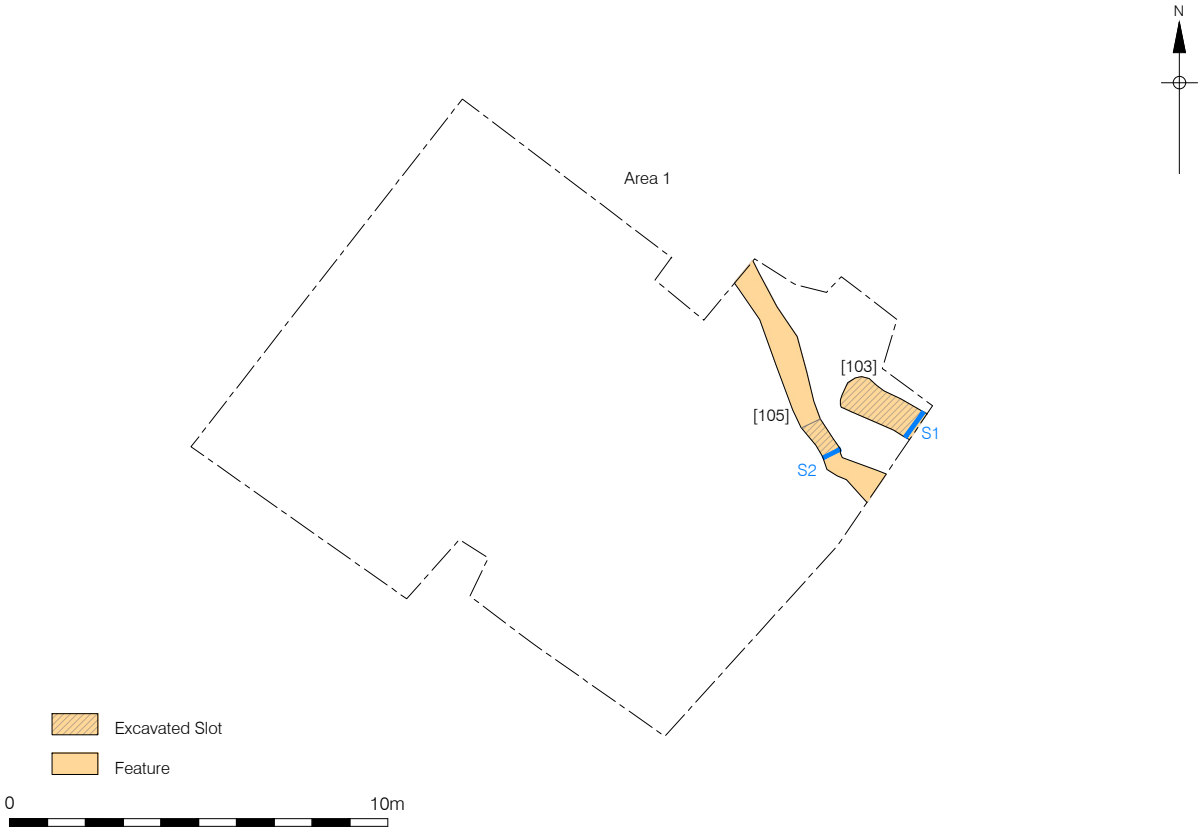


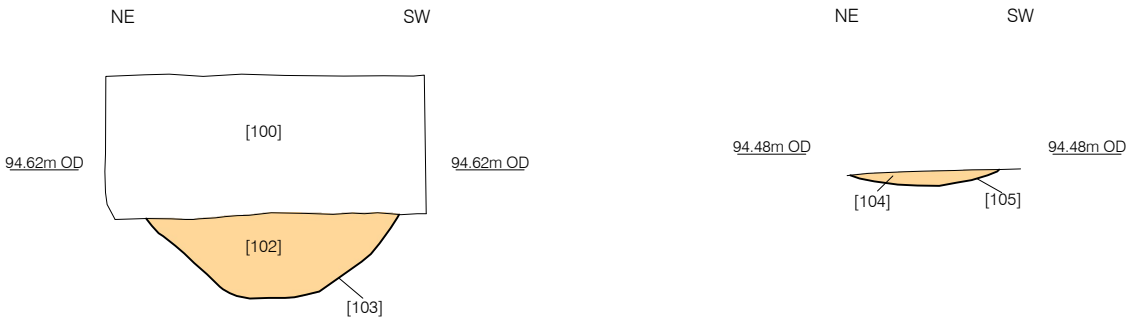
27/05/22 MM

Figure 1
Site Location
1:2,000,000; 1:250,000; 1:25,000 at A4

27/05/22 MM

Figure 2
Detailed Site Location
1:800 at A4





Section 1
Northwest Facing

Section 2
Northwest Facing

27/05/2022 MM

Figure 3
Area 1 Plan 1:200
Sections 1:25 at A4

APPENDIX 1: PLATES

Plate 1: General view of watching brief area (House B), direction of view east.

Plate 2: General view of watching brief area (House B), direction of view west.

Plate 3: North-west facing section of Ditch [103], scale: 0.5m.

Plate 4: Ditch [103] showing NW terminus, direction of view SE, scale: 1m.

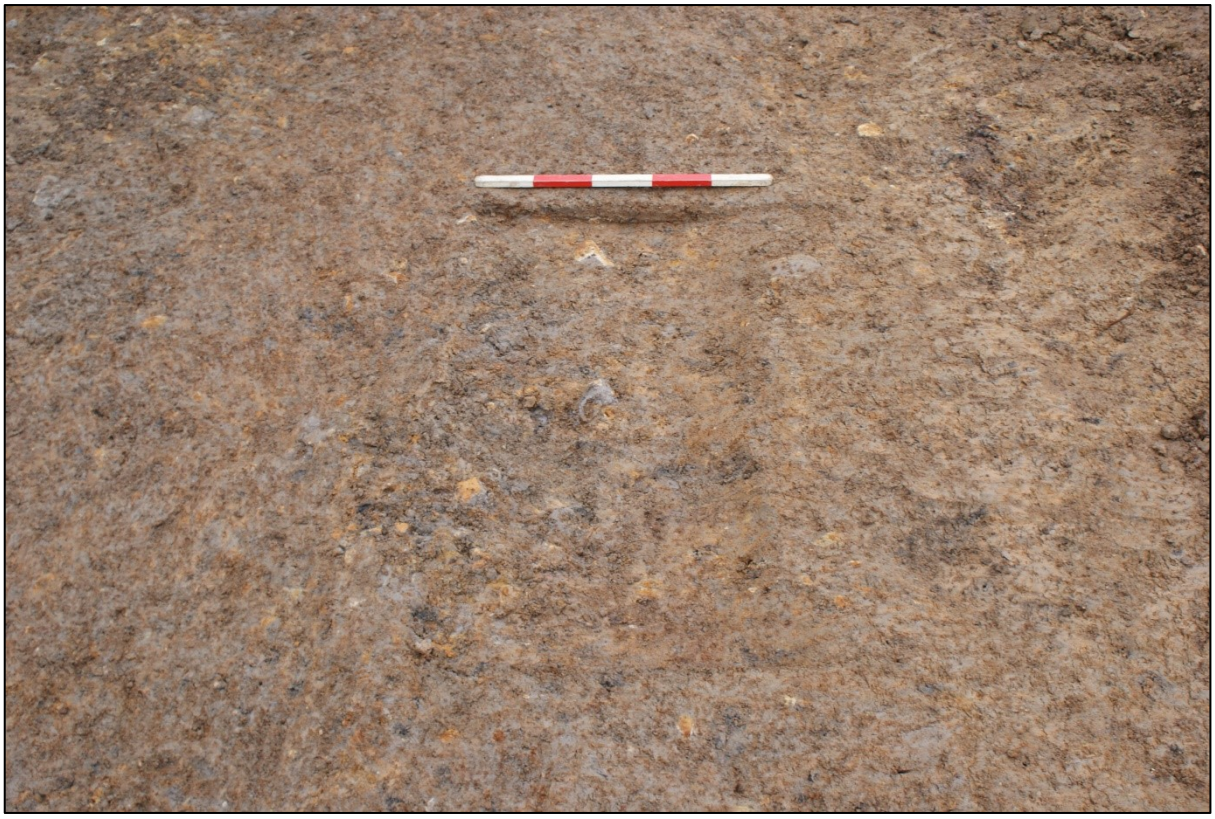
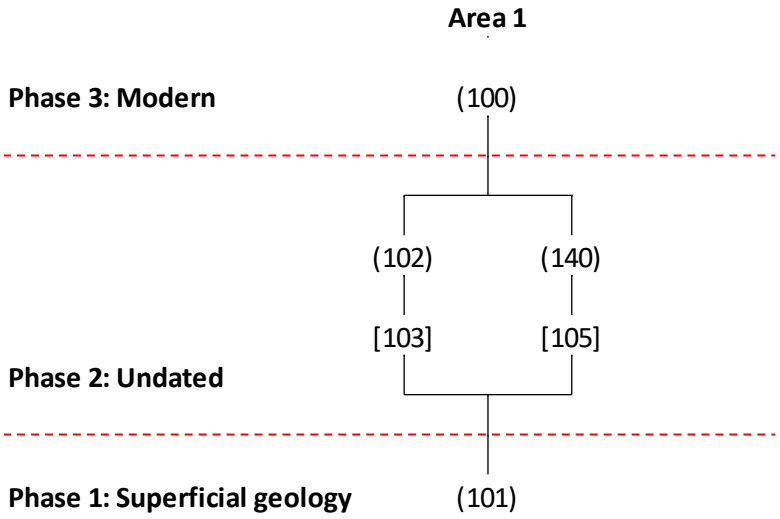


Plate 5: Ditch [105], direction of view SE, scale: 0.5m.

APPENDIX 2: MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	*Phase*	*Type 1*	*Type 2*	*Fill of*	*Interpretation*
100	3	Deposit	Layer		Modern levelling
101	1	Deposit	Layer		Natural superficial geology
102	2	Deposit	Fill	[103]	Fill of ditch
103	2	Cut	Linear		Ditch filled by 102]
104	2	Deposit	Fill	[105]	Fill of ditch
105	2	Deposit	Linear		Ditch filled by [104]

APPENDIX 4: PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

By Duncan Field

Introduction

This report summarises the content of one bulk sample collected during a watching brief at Tudhoe Village, County Durham.

Methodology

One bulk sample was collected from a ditch during an archaeological watching brief at Tudhoe Village. This sample was 31 litres in volume.

The sample was processed using a modified Siraf-type water floatation system, with material collected using a 300µm mesh for the light fraction (flot) and a 1mm mesh for the heavy residue (retent). The retent was then air-dried, sieved at 1, 2 and 4mm fractions, and sorted to extract artefacts and ecofacts. The flot (>300µm), once dried, was scanned under a low-power binocular microscope at 10x magnification to determine quantities of environmental material, e.g. seeds, chaff, charred grains, molluscs, and charcoal.

Abundance of artefacts/ecofacts in both the flot and retent were recorded using a non-linear scale where '1' indicates occasional occurrence (1-10 items), '2' indicates occurrence is fairly frequent (11-30 items), '3' indicates presence is frequent (31-100 items) and '4' indicates an abundance of material (>100 items).

Seeds were identified to species level where possible in accordance with Cappers (2012). Supported by respective reference collections. Nomenclature follows Stace (2014). Results are presented in Table 1.

Results

No archaeological finds were present in <1>. Infrequent charcoal was present in the retent of <1>, however the assemblage was too small to gain a species ID and therefore not suitable for AMS dating. Additionally a single seed attributed to the *Cyperaceae* family (the sedges), a family often found in wetland environments. The flot of <1> was dominated by abundant peaty detritus, none of which was diagnostic, potentially suggesting a degree of preservation through waterlogging. The nature of the deposit the sample was collected from, a ditch, fits with this conclusion.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The single sample collected from TVD22 did not contain any finds of archaeological significance or ecofacts of palaeoenvironmental significance.

No further analysis is recommended and the flot maybe discarded.

References

Jones, S., Taylor, J. and Ash, F. 2004. *Seed Identification Handbook: Agriculture, Horticulture & Weeds*. Cambridge: National Institute of Agricultural Botany.

Neef, R., Cappers, R. T. J. and Bekker, R. M. 2012. *Digital atlas of economic plants in archaeology*. Groningen: Barkhuis & Gronongen University Library.

Stace, C. 2014. *New flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Catalogue of Results

Table 1, bulk sample contents

Sample Number	**1**
Context Number	**102**
Area	**1**
Feature	**Ditch**
Volume overall sample (litres)	**31**
Volume of flot (ml)	**60**
Flot	
Carbonised Plant Remains	
Charcoal >4 mm	
Charcoal 2 - 4 mm	
Charcoal <2 mm	
Other Plant Macrofossils	
Cyperaceae sp.	**1**
Rooting	**4**
Peaty detritus	**4**
Retent	
Carbonised Plant Remains	
Charcoal >4mm	**1**
Charcoal-2 to 4mm	**1**
Charcoal <2mm	

Key: 1-Occasional, 2-fairly frequent, 3-frequent, 4-abundant

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